

Testimony of D'Naysha Brown

in opposition to HB-6659 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2025, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR.

Senator Osten, Representative Walker, members of the Appropriations Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify on the Governor's proposed budget for the Office of Early Childhood.

My name is D'Naysha Brown and I live in Milford. I am a parent and the director of A Child's World in Bridgeport. As a director, we have lost qualified teachers to the public school system due to benefits and better pay. As a program that has been supporting children and families within Bridgeport CT for over 30 years, I believe we should have enough funds to provide basic benefits for our teachers. Our teachers are required to continue their education, yet as their degrees are received raises can only be received in cents. As inflation increases, our educators struggle to make ends meet. In which result to them leaving in search for higher salaries and health insurance. The children, families and staff of A Child's World and all other early childhood programs deserve additional funding to continue making early child education an affordable and beneficial experience.

As a parent, early childhood tuitions are increasing and are unaffordable compared to my salary. I currently do not have health insurance, nor can I afford a raise at work in fear to lose health insurance for my children because I can not afford to pay for healthcare on my own. My oldest attends public school in Milford, CT and paying for school lunch has presented itself as a struggle for me because I just do not make enough. If my job as a preschool director can give me a raise large enough to support the basic needs of a family, we would be better off.

Listening to other testimonies leave me speechless. If public schools need additional funding, imagine what help aids (including financial) early childhood education programs need. There had to be at least one teacher that made a difference in your life. Support those children who are in the education journey now. We want teachers to be life changing and school/preschool programs to be supportive to our future. But with teachers leaving the field and our government robbing the field of the funds they deserve and need to continue developmental success; we will be in trouble!!!

Thank You,

D'Naysha Brown

Mother

Director